

**VA****U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs**

# News Release

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*Washington, D.C.* -- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has awarded an \$11.1 million contract to Welty Building Company of Akron, Ohio, to construct the first phase of a Cleveland-area national cemetery.

The 60-acre initial construction phase calls for 15,900 full-casket gravesites and 3,000 sites for cremated remains, including 2,000 columbaria niches and 1,000 garden niches. The plan also includes construction of a cemetery entrance area, administration/maintenance complex, two committal service shelters, and roadways, landscaping, utilities and an irrigation system.

The 274-acre site is located in Guilford Township in Medina County, 45 miles south of Cleveland near the town of Rittman. An initial burial area is expected to be available for interments in late 1999. Completion of the first phase is projected in 18 to 24 months with a dedication date to be determined.

Veterans with discharges other than dishonorable, their spouses and dependent children are eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery. VA also provides grave markers or headstones for the unmarked graves of eligible veterans even if they are not buried in a national cemetery. VA does not reserve space in national cemeteries prior to the time of need.

Information on VA burial benefits is available from national cemetery offices and VA regional offices, which can be reached toll-free at 1-800-827-1000. Information also is available on VA's Internet home page at <http://www.va.gov> or the National Cemetery System home page at <http://www.va.gov/cemetery/index.htm>